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the COMICS Connection

"Just For The Fun Of It"

Fun Packed Special Issue

This Issue

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AND MORE

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Welcome! And to all of you who bought **The Fan Connection** last year, welcome back. A lot's changed for Milky Way Graphics in the past year. Several announced projects never got published due to the great B&W Boom (and bust) of '86 which left several publishers, distributors, and retailers wheezing. Glenwood, a major distributor, went under completely owing us about $3,500; another distributor, Crown, owes us $1,300 (some of that for over a year) and won't be handling this book. What I'm trying to say is that we're sorry for the projects we announced and then never printed,(ie. **Mutant Forces, One-Shot Parody Issue**, and the original **Fan Connection**) but at the same time we wanted to point out that it wasn't entirely our fault.

Enough of that. **The Comics Connection** is back and it's still out to put the fun back in comics. If enough of you fans buy it regularly, we'll be around for a long time to come.

Take care 'til next month,
Bradd Mielke
Editor TCC

Contributors' Information

(Important: Writers and Artists should send Xerox copies only. Please, don't send us your originals.)

Writers:

1) We're looking for series reviews on recent fan favorite **comic series** such as Watchmen, Grell's Green Arrow, Byrne's Superman, Moore's Swamp Thing, X-Factor, The Punisher, and others.
2) We're looking for critiques (articles) on the careers of fan favorite artists. We're currently running a John Byrne series. Frank Miller, Walt Simonson, George Perez, John Buscema, Mike Golden, and Mike Grell are just some of those we'd like to do in the future.

Artists:

We'll use artwork of popular characters for our covers as we receive it. We also need single panel cartoons about comics for interior pages. Remember to watch for our art contests which will run in nearly every issue.

Letter Writers:

1) Our regular letter column, Sound Off, is for you. It lets you spout off about anything you want. Long or short letters—just send them.
2) Letters with a theme will be used in the form of an article when enough letters on one subject are received. (See this issue's X-Men vs. Teen Titans). The articles we are planning include: 1) John Byrne: Is he better than ever, or was he better before? 2) Are there too many mutants or mutant team books? 3) What went wrong with the Titans?

Send all submissions, contributions, and correspondence to the address below. (If you wish a personal reply, you **must** include a SASE.)

Milky Way Graphics
Box 381
Sleepy Eye, MN 56085

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Picture-Newsbriefs

There are tons of new books and projects coming your way. Here's just a sample.

Millenium, an eight-issue, weekly, mini-series will be published this fall by DC. With story by Steve Englehart and art by Joe Staton and Ian Gibson, This series promises to be this year's **Crisis on Infinite Earths**.

Silverblade, a 12-issue mini-series by Cary Bates, Gene Colan, and Steve Mitchell depicts the fate of an aging film star who inherits the power to become characters he played on screen.

World of Krypton, a 4-issue, DC mini-series will be written by John Byrne and have art by Mike Mignola and Rick Bryant.

Lone Wolf and Cub, an on-going monthly series by First will reprint for the first time in English, this extremely popular Japanese Samurai adventure. With a square-bound cover and a $1.95 price tag, this 64 page comic is one of the best buys anywhere. If that weren't enough, Frank Miller does the covers.

Axa, a new bi-monthly from Eclipse, is based on Enrique Romero's popular British comic strip. The art is still by Romero, and Chuck Dixon does the scripts.

Fathom, one of Bill Willingham's Elementals has been given a four-issue mini-series. Published monthly by Comico.

Gladstone is launching 2 new duck comics in mid-August. **Duck Tales**, a tie in with the new animated TV show premiering in September, will premiere with, "McDuck of Arabia" by Carl Barks.The second new book is **Donald Duck Adventures**.

DC's next Prestige Format title will be a three-issue **Blackhawk** mini-series by Howard Chaykin.

Futurians, Dave Cockrum's second Futurians graphic novel will finally see print, thanks to new publisher, Eternity. It will be 104 pages, full color, and available in soft cover, hard cover, and Deluxe signed.

Hand of Fate is a new Bruce Jones Associates book from Eclipse which has been described as "Sam Spade Meets the Nightstalker."

Psychoblast premieres this month from First in an ongoing monthly deluxe series by Steven Grant and Robb Phipps. (In other First news, the entire line is now in deluxe format.

JACK HUNTER #1
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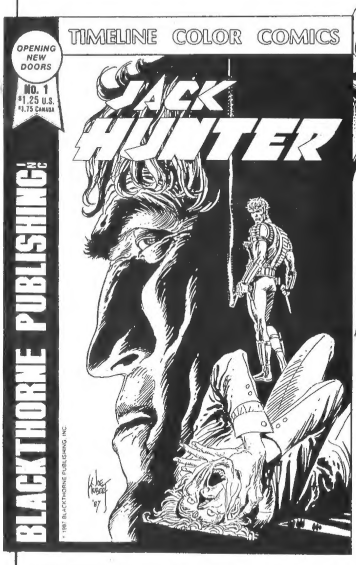

Written by
BRUCE JONES!
Pencils & Inks by
DELL BARRAS!
Cover #1 by
JOE KUBERT!

JACK HUNTER! Combat veteran in Southeast Asia. Agent for both the CIA and NSB. A man extremely good at doing extremely nasty jobs. A man pushed over the edge of sanity, into madness and amnesia. Loose in the streets. Somewhere.

JACK HUNTER! This is not just an adventure story filled with explosive action and intrigue, but an intense character study. The story of a man pushed far past the limits of lunacy, struggling to find out who he is in a world where every face may hide a deadly enemy.

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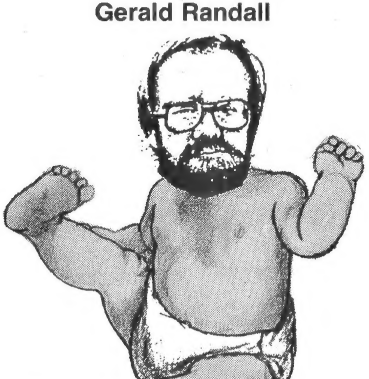
John Byrne

A Critic Looks Back
Part 1: The Early Years

by
Gerald Randall



Most people would think that it's a simple task to take a look back at the early work of a super-fan-favorite like John Byrne and say, "Yeah, this guy had greatness written all over him." It would be a lot tougher to review his early work and find nothing but problems with it. It's going to look like I'm taking the easy way out, because I like most of his early work a lot.

What I find hardest to believe, is that the same man who gained his

As these three sample pages show, John's style on Rog ranged from cartoony to realistic, with a good eye for the placement of black areas within the overall composition of each page. It should also be noted that, even then, his backgrounds were less detailed and developed than characters and foregrounds.

fame drawing **X-Men**, and who later went on to write and draw **Alpha Flight** and **Fantastic Four**, and now **Superman**, is the same guy who, ten years ago, wrote and drew **Wheelie and the Chopper Bunch**. My job is to tell you if **Wheelie** was any good, and to do likewise with two other Charlton series John worked on. I won't be reviewing his **Emergency** or **Space; 1999** work because, quite frankly, I couldn't get these books anywhere. No one had them. (Editor's note: If there's any fan reading this right now who would like to fill in this "gap," we'd be more than happy to see your reviews of those two series. Just be sure to send along some Xeroxed sample art.) What follows is still a pretty good cross-section of his Charlton work.

With his very first professional assignment, "Rog 2000," Byrne proved he already had the makings of a very fine comic book artist. Singlehandedly, he redefined what a comic book robot should look like. Rog didn't have the bulky, gray appearance that readers had come to expect from such mechanisms. No, Rog was sleek and ultra-modern, with jointed fingers and a body that was built as if his creator had stainless steel ligaments, tendons, and muscles to construct him with. And through it all, Rog looked metallic. Properly placed highlights, and a pattern of regularly broken ink lines produced "the look" that so many of today's fan-favorite artists currently use when drawing robots. And Byrne did that on his first assignment...

Before you think I'm going just a little bit overboard with my praise, I should point out that Byrne did have some difficulties. Backgrounds were less developed and detailed than they should have been, almost as if his mind's eye could not yet completely imagine what the finished drawing might look like. The shot of the mansion in "Withering Heights" comes to mind. He was also finding out which types and sizes of pens or brushes would reproduce best with Charlton's less than desirable printing facilities. (Charlton's one company that never bragged about the **printing** quality of their comics.) But even these faults weren't that noticeable because of his unerring ability to place the proper balance of blacks and whites on a page. Just a quick glance at any of his pages lets you know he's professional. He's not afraid to add ink to

Wheelie and the Chopper Bunch
The Great FAMINE
THERE OUGHTA BE A LAW AGAINST GLOWPOKES CLUTTERIN' UP THE HIGHWAY!
VROOM
CHOPPER AND HIS GANG WASTE A LOT OF GAS ROARING AROUND AT HIGH SPEED!
HEY, GUYS! I'M RUNNIN' OUTTA GAS!
SPLUT
MY GAS TANK IS EMPTY!
YOLDJA! YOLDJA!
IT SERVES THEM RIGHT!
SPUTT
HEY, WHEELIE, OL' PAL, OL' PAL, HOW ABOUT LOANIN' US SOME GAS? YOU ALWAYS GOTTA FULL TANK!
I ONLY GOT A LITTLE GAS LEFT, CHOPPER! WE OUGHTA SLOW DOWN!
WE'LL GAS UP AT THE NEXT STATION, SCRAMBLES! STOP WORRYIN'!
THEY DON'T CARE ABOUT THE SHORTAGE OF GAS AND OIL!
BRRR!
POOR SCRAMBLES!
FUEL SCRAMBLES! GET US TO THE GAS STATION!
CONTINUED AFTER FOLLOWING PAGE
IF YOU'D USE COMMON SENSE YOU WOULDN'T DRINK SO MUCH GAS, CHOPPER!
BEAT IT, DOLL! YA BOTHER ME!
YOU'RE LUCKY, ROTA! YOU AND WHEELIE GET THE LAST GALLON OF GAS!
JUST MADE IT, WHEELIE!
UH OH! HERE COME CHOPPER AND HIS HOODLUMS! THEY ALWAYS GIVE ME A BAD TIME!
I'M FIRST, PUMPER! FILL ME UP!
I C-CAN'T SELL YOU ANY GAS! I-I JUST SOLD ALL I HAD TO WHEELIE AND ROTA!
IF YOU'RE NOT LOOKIN' OUT ON US, WISE-GUY...
YA BETTER SPLIT THE GAS WITH ME, SHRIMP, OR I'LL RUN YA OFFA THE HIGHWAY!
WHAT'R YA LAUGHIN' AT?

It's no great mystery why John would do work like this. It was fun and he probably got paid pretty well. Notice John's name in the upper right hand corner of the 1st page. For those of you who have never seen this work before, enjoy.

Wheelie copyright© 1975 Hanna Barbera.

satisfy mood. If anything John Byrne, lately, has become to hesitant to place black areas in his work; the result being his uncolored work looking more and more like coloring book pages. But we'll discuss that in future segments of this series.

In keeping with the "tongue in cheek" attitude of "Rog 2000," Byrne balanced the realism that oftimes needed with the cartoony style he had already developed with interesting results. Somewhere on these pages is a scene where a man is being pulled into a closet. Take a look at that page. You'll notice the style, back-grounds, and overall composition are all highly realistic, yet the man being drawn into the closet is nothing more than an exaggerated cartoon. Mixing like this does not often work. Byrne pulled it off beautifully.

It was probably this cartoony style that gave Byrne another of his Charlton projects, **Wheelie and the Chopper Bunch**. To sum it up, even Byrne's vast talent couldn't make these stories interesting. What else can I say? The idea of a little car being pursued by a bunch of motorcycles was an awfully dumb concept in cartoon form. (Yes, in case anyone's still wondering, the book was based on a Hanna-Barbera cartoon, John didn't come up with the idea himself.) It got worse in comic book form because the only thing it had going for it, real action, was lost in the transition. Just try to imagine how difficult this book was to do, pretend you're working on a comic whose characters possess no arms or legs and who must always be outside on a road or highway. At the very least, it's going to make you real good with facial expressions.

I believe John was once quoted in an interview saying that this was some of the best work he ever did. What he probably meant was that this was one of the best **jobs** he ever had. Looking at the quality of this work, he put out most of these books, both writing and drawing, over night. For those of you who have never seen this work, we're including a few sample pages so that you can judge for yourself.

John's first straight adventure series was **Doomsday +1**, which lasted 6 issues. Before I go any further, I think I should add that the series as a whole, storywise, wasn't very good. I'm only reviewing what John's art did for it. If you were to look at just the art, never reading the actual stories, I think you, like me, would come away with a favorable review of the series.

His art on the first issue can best be described, "ragged." His storytelling, though accomplished is diminished somewhat by the hurried look of his background inking. That's not bad when you consider by later issues that there's no background to ink. The Byrne of today can still be seen in the dramatic panel arrangements on some of the early pages of this first book. Each panel is given the proper forethought before it is drawn. (That

DESTROY THEM!
IN A LASER RIFLE SHOOT-UP SITUATION
CHUD
INVINCIBLE NERO-CIRCUITS MAKE ME A KILLING MACHINE!
AS YOU SAY! WHAT TREATED SUB-HUMAN!
BOOOOOOM
BUNDY! YOU MUST HELP US! IF THEY TRUTH, THEY'LL OVERRUN THE BASE AND KILL US!
I'LL BUY YOU ANY DRINK YOU WANT!
I'LL GET SOME REINFORCEMENTS! FALL BACK TO THE ARMORY!
DOOMSDAY SQUAD
35¢
WELCOME, AIR-BREATHERS, TO THE HIDDEN EMPIRE!

John drew both robots and fish people really well. Later issues, inked by Patterson, looked awful.

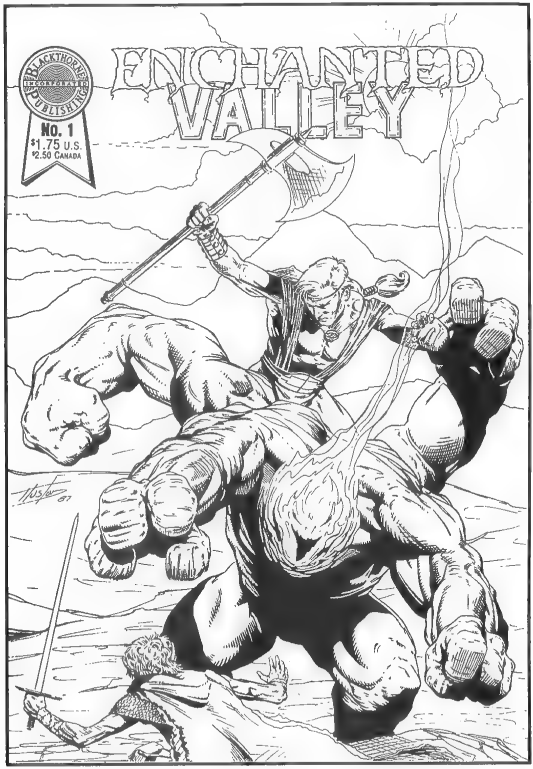
can't be said about many of today's books, by any artist.)

The best book in the series was issue two; in it Byrne got to show off his skill of drawing robots; page after page of them. His inking is still in its infant stages and I must say I prefer the way it looks on Rog 2000 a lot more. Later issues in the series are harder to review because Byrne was getting an inking assist from (as the credits say)Patterson 75. I'm assuming that this is Bruce Patterson, current inker on **Wonder Woman**, before he learned how to ink. Issue number five was just awful. It consisted of poorly drawn interior shots and gave me the distinct feeling I was reading a bad fanzine. If you want to take a better look at this series, it was recently reprinted as **Doomsday Squad**. I caution you to look before buying. These stories are not John at his best. ■

NEXT TIME: On to Marvel and Mutants!

COLORING CONTEST

Below is the cover to a Blackthorne comic. To celebrate their new line of color comics premiering this summer, we want you to color it. (A xerox copy or stat is fine, too.) 2 categories: 17 and under, 18 and older, 1st prize $20. Color it with anything you like (colors, oils, markers, pencils, etc.) but make it look good. Sorry, entries will not be returned. Hurry, contest ends August 15, 1987. Send to: Coloring contest, c/o Milky Way Graphics, Box 381, Sleepy Eye, MN 56085.



Fandom Poll

Favorites. Everybody has favorites. Opinions. Everybody has those, too. Here's your chance to let everybody else know your favorites and opinions without having to go through the bother of sitting down and writing a letter. It's short; it's easy; it's fun. Frustrating, too, if we did our job right.

In this, our very first installment, we're not going to have you simply pick your favorite penciller, oh no, that'd be too easy. What we're going to have you do is select your favorite penciller between a choice of two. The winner goes on to the next round, and so on, until you have a finalist. He'll go against next month's finalist to determine the overall winner.

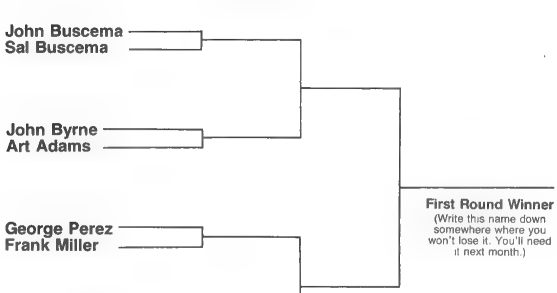
RULES: If you don't know **one** of the two people going against each other, advance the person **you do know** to the next round. If you don't know either person, put an **X** on the next line. **No Ties.** No matter how difficult the choice, pick your favorite between the two.

One last comment. The person's work you're judging doesn't have to be recent. Imagine each penciller, inked by his best inker, on any book or story you've ever seen him do. For your **own** amusement you may wish to go the other way as well. . .

Send to:
FANDOM POLL
c/o Milky Way Graphics
P.O. Box 381
Sleepy Eye, MN 56085

(Hurry! Polls must be received by August 15!)

Comics' Best Pencillers
HEAD TO HEAD COMPETITION (ROUND 1)



Favorite Publication About Comics

Amazing Heroes and **The Comics Buyer's Guide** both have their own polls to find out which books and creators are best. The problem is (until now,) no one's had a chance to vote for either of these two publications as fandom's favorite. Now you can. My favorite Publication about comics (between the two listed publications **only**: no write-ins; they won't be counted.) is:

_____ **Amazing Heroes**

_____ **The Comic Buyer's Guide**
(Check your favorite)

Remember to send in the **whole** ballot. Xerox copies and **very neat** handwritten ballots will also be accepted, but please vote only once. Any and all interesting observations will be reported in a future issue of TCC. Be here next time for another including Round II and the finals of "Comics' Best Penciller."

THE FUN CONNECTION

On the following page is a comic book cover made up of the parts of several different comic book covers. Each of the covers used was a cover dated August 1987 and originally appeared on Marvel, DC, First, and Gladstone comics. All characters and titles are copyright their respective creators and companies.

Your job is to name all the covers used, in the correct order. (See chart below.) Enter as many times as you like, but only one entry per envelope is permitted.

Name of Title
(No issue number is necessary)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
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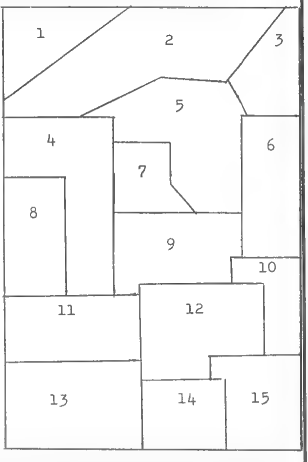
15. _____



One winner will be selected from all correct entries. The prize will be a grabbag of 40 different old and new comic books. You may copy the entry if you wish. Hurry, all entries must be postmarked by Aug. 10, 1987.

Send your completed entry to

Puzzle No. 1
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P.O. Box 381
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Give—Away No. 1

Puzzle too much work? Try this instead. Send us a postcard with you name and address on it. We'll select two cards from all these received and each of those two will win a grabbag of 20 comics. Remember, those cards must be mailed by Aug. 10, 1987 to be eligible to win.

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AUTHORITY

REVIEWS

The Best (and most disappointing, of late 1986 and early 1987).

Since I'll be writing most of the reviews for **The Comics Connection**, I think it's only fair that, this first time out, you see which comics are my favorites. This list isn't all inclusive because I don't read all the comics currently being published. Like everyone else, my comics budget is limited and I stick to buying comics I like the most, experimenting from time to time with titles that look the most promising. If your comic isn't listed here it might be because I haven't read it. You can send review copies to: Editor, Milky Way Graphics, Box 381, Sleepy Eye, MN 56085.

The Best:

1) Watchmen

Is there anyone who can tell a story better than Alan Moore? This maxi-series is the best SF/Superhero comic-ever. Dave Gibbons, as artist, is at his best as well. A classic. Period.

2) Batman: Year One

As an artist/writer no one surpasses Frank Miller. As a writer, Miller is nearly as good as Alan Moore. This time he works with artist David Mazzucchelli, whose style is obviously Miller-influenced, and they have combined for some kind of story. Mazzucchelli, in a very short time, has become one of the finest storytellers in comics. DC should take a bow for this one.

3) X-Factor

What started out as one of the worst comics Marvel has ever published has suddenly become its best title. Louise Simonson proved herself as one

of comics' best writers on **Powerpack**. Now she along with (fan favorite artist) husband Walt, has created the best super team/mutant comic available. Plotting, scripting, art, and dialog are all tops.

4) Jonny Quest No. 6

I know everyone's asking, "What's this book doing here?" The answer is Adam Kubert. Wow, can this guy pencil, ink, and color! He gets my vote as, "Least Heralded Major Talent in the Industry." This series as a whole has been very disappointing due primarily to Comico's annoying premise that it's best to alternate artists every issue. Stop already! Give Adam the book. (The story, by the way, was also the best of the series so far.) Go to a back issue store and buy it.

5) Batman Annual No.11

(Lead story) Take Clayface, add the beautiful art of George Freeman, (Personal aside-why isn't this guy given a regular assignment on some book, preferably **Batman**? His style reminds me of Michael Golden's **Batman** work of 10 years ago. This story alone puts him among the best "Batartists" of all time. Yes, it really is that good.) And the always professional scripting of Alan Moore, and you have one great Batman story.

6) Swamp Thing

The "Death of Swamp Thing" stories that Alan Moore has been feeding us these last few months have been nearly as good as the first few stories he did on this book. He writes a great Lex Luthor.

7) Thor

Even without Walt Simonson's art, this book remains one of Marvel's best. Walt still writes the book as well as he ever did and Sal Buscema's art has really improved since he started using Simonson's simpler line techniques.

8) High Society

A 500 page comic book? Yes. Reprinting the best of Dave Sim's **Cerebus** (issues 26-50) this book is a steal for the $22 I paid for it. I recommend buying it, the recently printed **Church and State** (Issues 51-80), and the soon to be reprinted original **Cerebus** (issues 1-25.)Each is a great buy.

9) Superman/Action

John Byrne proved on the Fantastic Four that he could write and draw established characters as well as any one. So what's he do for an encore? An enjoyable rendition of the most well known character in comics' history, that's what. Byrne gets fantastic support in the inking department as well. On **Superman**, Karl Kessel is proving himself the best inker for Byrne since Terry Austin. In **Action**, Dick Giordano continues to prove he's one the best embellishers ever to dip a brush in ink.

10) Uncle Scrooge

No. 219 "Son of the Sun" Uncle Scrooge by Don Rosa is about as close as you can get to Uncle Scrooge by Carl Barks. The scripting, pacing, foreshadowing, and art are all so reminiscent of Barks that unless you know it was done by Rosa, you might think it was done by Barks. An instant classic in the same tradition as Barks' best.

11) X-Men/New Mutants

Okay, so everybody else publishes a "Top 10." I need 11 places because there's no way I'm going to finish off a "best of" category without at least mentioning Claremont's mutant books. No, they're not as enjoyable as they once were, and yes I know that neither book has had a consistent art team for over a year now, but that doesn't matter; Chris Claremont tells extremely good stories that both new and old readers can sit back and enjoy reading. (Besides, the fill-in artists they pick for these books are better than the regular art teams on most others.)

You'll notice this next section isn't labeled, "The worst comics..." That's because they're not. If I wanted to list the worst comics, I'd have to actually read several hundred B&W's published in the last year, and I'm not going to subject myself to that kind of torture. Instead, I'm listing comics that I expected great things from, or that other critics loved, but just couldn't get into. (My biggest disappointment of all time? Last year's **The Shadow** miniseries by Howard Chaykin.)

The Most Disappointing:

1) Swamp Thing No. 60

(The first issue of the new format) Did anyone actually try to read this? I mean, if the art were published in any random order, it would have been just as "effective." Karen Berger, the editor of this joke, should have offered a lot more guidance.

2) Elektra

No single page of the first three issues interested me enough to even want to turn to the next page. Normally Frank Miller gets an "A" on everything he does; the same goes for Bill Sienkieviewz, who is one of the best penciller/inkers in the business. But, I don't like his painting style, and as a result, I gave up on this series after three issues.

3) Wonder Woman

George Perez has a knack for drawing lots of superheroes, in one scene, well. When it comes to storytelling, and drawing just "regular" people, he's not nearly as good. This new origin, and the new stories are just as bad as previous incarnations. I don't understand why the powers that be at DC don't realize that this concept (and this character) is a hopeless cause, and just scrap her. If they want to keep her copyright valid for merchandising purposes, they could just as easily publish a low print run, B&W give-away, one-shot every couple of years.

4) Adventures of Superman

I'll admit that this comic doesn't actually fit my definition of "disappointing." I don't like the way Marv Wolfman writes, and I've never liked Jerry Ordway's art. I just thought that with Byrne giving direction on the character, I might like this book. I don't.

Teen Titans vs. X-Men
the Fans speak out

Dan Schofield
Johnstown, PA

I have read both the **New Teen Titans** and the **X-Men** for over five years now, and in my opinion the **New Teen Titans** is the better book. This has been a subject that I've discussed with my friends and have thought about for some time. I'll tackle the **X-Men** first.

I am by no means the longest X-Men fan, but I have read the comic faithfully since no. 127, and I think that I'm qualified to comment on the title. The comic has changed significantly since the time I first started reading it. The **X-Men** was always an extremely enjoyable comic, and had a sense of optimism and fun. Oh, sure, they had their share of problems as all teams do. But these troubles never seemed to be any worse than those suffered by other teams and individuals. We always heard about the anti-mutant sentiment, however, it rarely--if ever--became one of the most predominant themes of the book. All of this is no longer so.

There really isn't one overall thing that has changed, but a number of sometimes related alterations have a cumulative effect. Perhaps the biggest change has been this encroaching wave of gloominess, also seen in the **New Mutants**. You almost never see the mutants having fun or lasting joy. If such things do happen on a fairly regular basis, then we are not allowed to see it. The X-Men are always in the midst of despair over their powers, not living like real people, and being ridiculed.Believe me when I say that I know what it's like to be hated because of who you are and what you look like. It happend to me all too many times. But I always knew they were wrong and there was nothing the matter with me. I didn't wallow in all this self-pity and wish I was 'normal' and like those who disliked me. The characters and the tone of the book seem to project a rather dismal view of the world and that life is miserable. The somewhat shadowy artwork--as in the main companion title the **New Mutants**--only serves to add to this atmosphere.

Other things that bother me I have labeled 'Claremont Cliches.' One of these is that his 'power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely' theme. There are so many Marvel characters who have great power and didn't get corrupted that this happening to most of the mutants sets up an inconsistency. Every mutant who gets power in their early teens is shown to be an immediate outcast and laments the fact that they can't control their powers, or that they have powers in the first place. 'Help! My powers are out of control!' and 'These powers are a curse!' are recurrent statements that wear thin after a time. All too many times this leads to 'Dark' incarnations of our beloved characters. The other most used cliche is mutilation. The X-Men are always being burned, beaten badly, and impaled with a variety of bladed weapons. I realize that this is suppose to add suspense and realism, but the X-Men always get out of it by healing factors, imposters showing up to actuasally be the ones that are killed, or Shi'ar superscience saving them. Claremont has overused the drama of having a character near death, and now it's all predicable and decidedly undramatic.

I suppose the final problem came to me after reading **X-Men** no. 200. What is it you ask? Simple. During the story Magneto mentioned the oppression of mutants and the character of Sir Jaspers challenged him, asking for proof of this great oppression. I think the guy is right. The Mutants aren't oppressed. Sure, many people speak out against the mutants and demonstrate, but that's their right in America and other free societies whether they're right or not. I hardly consider it oppression. People have tried to kill mutants, but these are the criminal actions of individuals. One other thing,the Marvel Universe is supposed to be our world, except there are superpowered beings. Hence the concentration on realism. If this is so, then who truly believes that the government could get away so easily with blatant illegal and

The following article is from last year's **The Fan Connection**. We're reprinting it to let fans know what kind of letters we like to receive. Part 2 of this article will be reprinted next month.

X-Men © copyright 1987 Marvel Comics.
Teen Titans © copyright 1987 DC Comics

EVEN MUTANTS CAN HAVE THEIR CHOICES TAKEN AWAY IN THE NAME OF CHOICE.
DEFEAT HIM AND YOU'LL HAVE YOUR WISH!
SCOTT, SOMETHING'S WRONG!
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR THE WRONG MUTANT!
I'LL TAKE YOU ON!
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR THE WRONG MUTANT!
OUR FIRST LAW IS TO PROTECT OUR MUTANT BRETHREN!
DON'T TO BATTLE MUTANTS!
DO YOU HEAR THAT, GESTALT?
YES, YOU SHALL HAVE YOUR DESTRUCTION, MUTANT!
AS YOU WISH, LORD EMPEROR!
THEN YOU CAN'T USE YOUR POWERS!
SOME MUTANTS WILL DESTROY US ALL... BECAUSE OF YOU!
AARGH! MY HEAD! MY HEAD!
I WAIT!
ANYTHING ANYONE HAS THAT BETTER YOU DESTROY!
ARE YOU NOT CONCERNED TO PROTECT HUMANKIND FROM MUTANTS?
BY FINDING NO MUTANTS AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF THAT MUTATION!
DO YOU HAVE ANY BRETHREN?
HE HERE!
ALL LIFE ENDS THE MOMENT IT MUTATES!
YOU'RE NOT A MUTANT!
YOU'RE NOT A MUTANT!
SCOTT

Before the 'New' X-Men, there were the 'Old' X-Men. Most fans feel they were drawn best by Neal Adams (with an assist, of course, by Tom Palmer, the inker.)

unconstitutional actions, such as kidnappings and attempting to pass Mutant Control legislation? Congress would never get close to discussing such laws as are mentioned in **X-Factor no. 1**. Who believes that any government in this day and age could keep all these government approved actions against mutants a secret? If the Marvel Universe is realistic, you could have fooled me. Of course, all this extends to the fact that no minority organization has come to the defense of mutants. Indeed, we've seen Blacks engaging in anti-mutant demonstrations. Please, get real folks.

Still, there is no open oppression of mutants. Are they forced to live in their own cities? Are mutants stopped from going where other people go? Do mutants have to carry special passes? Do mutants have to sit in the back of the bus, or use 'mutant only' bathrooms? Do the national guard and police regularly attack mutants? NO!! It's all an illusion. Things are manipulated in such a way that most readers are convinced that something is happening, when in reality little or nothing is going on.

So these are the major drawbacks of the X-Men: a gloomy outlook on life, clichés, and some lack of credibility and logic in recent storylines.

Now I'll answer the question as to why I think the **New Teen Titans** is better. Basically, the book is everything the **X-Men** is not--at least up to this point. The problems the characters go through don't seem to be any worse than those experienced by other teams, and their problems are eventually solved one way or the other instead of being perpetuated for more issues than I care to think about.

The Teen Titans project an air of enthusiasm and hope. There's a sense of fun, and joy in life. There is also a feeling that no matter how bad things get that we can work out these problems in the end. The book tells us, I believe, that life is good. The Titans have many occasion where they get to enjoy life without having to fight some villian.

The Teen Titans take pleasure in having accomplished a mission. The X-Men always seem to end a story more depressed and disallusioned than when everything began. They seem to have the opportunity to say many times how much they hate being mutants ignoring the fact that save peoples' lives.

To wrap things up,**The Uncanny X-Men** have 'Mutated' into a cheerless comic book, with few qualities remaining that first endeared me to the title. Only my continued like of the characters spurs me on to buy it each month. The **New Teen Titans** continues to be a more upbeat, fun, consistently entertaining comic. I haven't been able to find anything in the Titans' book to complain about so far, and believe me, I have looked.

I hope that I've been able to contribute something to your newborn publication, and thanks for giving me a chance to express my thoughts and feelings. Here's to the success of **The Fan Connection**.

"These people are always being burned, beaten badly, impaled, and run through with a variety of different weapons."

Mike Haught
Chester, WV

Who's better? X-Men? Titans?

Well, I've collected both fo a long while now. To compare is difficult enough because of the differences, but to say who is better is nearly impossible. With long thought, I've come to the conclusion that the X-Men are better, but not by much.

The X-Men are a tightly knit family group while the Titans have sub-groups (Starfire-Nightwing, Cyborg-Changling, Jericho-Raven, and for a while, before her marriage, Wondergirl was close to Starfire.)

The X-Men have one mentor-type figure in Prof. X. Practically each of the Titans has his or own (Nightwing-Batman, Wonder Girl-Wonder Woman, Kid Flash-Flash, Changling-Doom Patrol.) The different philosophies of these different mentors set up some interesting conflicts among the students. The **Titans** concentrates on the private lives of the characters, but

BITS & PIECES (Part I)

Rich Liu
Comic People
Mt. Laurel, NJ

I think that Prof. X is best dressed, and Starfire is least dressed.

Alan P. Masyga
Winona, MN

Neither are! In my opinion, the cancelled supergroup **the Defenders** are still the best superteam ever cancelled.

Jimmy Valdez
Aztec, NM

Storm. . .was my favorite character before she lost her powers and cut her hair.

SSG. Dwanah L. Covert
A.P.O. NY

I have no interest in either group

not as much on the public's reaction to them like the **X-Men** do. (Everyone knows the public's reaction to mutants.)

Though the Titans are hardly boring, I also believe the characters in the **X-Men** are a lot more interesting and show a lot more depth. Both groups have and will make many changes. I approved of Robin's change to Nightwing and Kitty's new identity is great. I liked Wonder Girl's marriage except that she and Starfire are no longer as close as they once were. I have mixed feelings about Storm's transformation and the loss of her powers (she better get 'em back soon guys.) Starfire's marriage has its ups and downs.

Both teams are great. It's what you do with them that counts. I love both teams dearly, but when it comes to which book I look forward to most on Tuesdays, X marks the spot.

Rich Thigpen
Auburn, AL

I don' t read any of the various **X-Men** and mutant books, but I do read **The New Teen Titans**. Therefore, instead of comparing the two books, I can only tell why I so thoroughly enjoy the Titans.

One of the main reasons, though not the most important, that I was first attracted to the **Titans** was the artwork. In my opinion, nobody--absolutely nobody--is a better artist than George Perez. The planning and detail he puts into his layouts is obvious, but what makes his art so great is that his characters all have recognizable faces. If all of the Titans were bald, you'd still be able to tell Dick Grayson from Wally West and Donna Long from Frances Kane. Even though George has moved on now, the art maintains its high quality.

Another great appeal is the sense of nostalgia found in the **Titans**. The murder of the Doom Patrol was avenged in the **Titans**. Old DC villains are brought back and presented in a fresh way in the **Titans**.

Probably the most interesting aspect of the Titans is the way each character has his own personality. Gar Logan doesn't act like Vic Stone, and vice-versa. The characters have individual motivations that make them incredibly realistic. I can relate to an adopted Amazon Princess as if she were my next door neighbor. These characters are also constantly maturing and developing.

These aspects, plus a few others (such as Starfire and Raven) make the **Titans** a pleasurable reading experience. Can anyone say the same about the **X-men**?

"Who believes that any government in this day and age could keep all these government approved actions against mutants a secret?"

Name and address
withheld by request

(Editor's note: The following was written by a fan who someday soon hopes to make it into the pro ranks. Not wanting to hurt his chance of future employment, he has asked that this letter be printed anonymously. Though nothing is extremely controversial, we have decided to honor his request. But letter writers, please take note, very rarely will we print letters this way. If you have something you want to say, let everyone know you said it. Sign it.)

Let's face it, most opinions are not based on facts, but on impressions left by the facts. And, for better or worse,that's the way a majority of people come up with their opinions no matter what the subject area. My general impression of **X-Men** has always been extremely favorable; my general impression of **Teen Titans** has primarily been unfavorable.

Artist discussions come first, they sell 95% of the books anyway. I'm not even going to talk about Byrne, he's old news on the **X-Men**; let's talk about Perez and the **Titans** first. Perez's sense of design and detail make him the perfect cover or poster artist. He's an impact artist. He dazzles you every few pages, and manages to tell a story between those designs. He worked well with Marv Wolfman, who is himself an im-

ONE BY ONE THEY TRY, AND ONE BY ONE THEY DISCOVER THEY CAN'T. THEIR HANDS ARE AS CLEAR AS EVER. BUT THEY HAVE ALONE THE POWER TO MAKE THEIR REAL SELVES BE SEEN. SCRAMBLED THEIR MINDS ARE AWASH UNCOMPREHENDED AS THE HORDE TRIES TO STRIKE SHEER TERROR AS PRIMAL AS ANY
ONE BY ONE THEIR FACES TWIST INTO MASKS OF HORROR AS THEY BEGIN TO REALISE WHAT'S BEEN DONE TO THEM
AN EYE FOR AN EYE, X-MEN!
"TO EACH MUTANT GOD GRANTS ANOTHER POWER. IN THEIR OWN WAY EACH IS AS UNIQUE AS YOU ARE. AS A SIX MONTH OLD CHILD IS TO BE HELPLESS
YOU WILL NOT FIT YOU WILL NOT BE YOU WILL BOOK WHAT YOU WERE BEFORE YOU WERE BUTTERED. TO BE AWARE OF WHO AND WHAT YOU ARE
"THERE IS A HELL I HAVE SURELY LEARNT TO MORE TERRIBLE THAN THIS
NEXT ISSUE: TRIUMPH and TRAGEDY!

The X-Men by Byrne and Austin, on one of that team's first X-Men stories.

"...The X-Men have "Mutated" into a cheerless comic..."

Wolverine by Byrne and Austin.

pact writer.

Perez left **Titans** for **Crisis**, probably the only penciller in comics who would actually volunteer to draw hundreds of characters, over and over again, in a twelve issue series. That's the appeal of Perez. He's a fan living out a fan's dream. He gets to draw all of his favorite comic book heroes and he has the satisfaction that most fans feel he draws them better than anyone else. (I know I said I wasn't going to mention Byrne, but he has the same appeal.) He's still got a fan's enthusiasm for these kinds of projects and what he lacks in looseness and storytelling ability, he more than makes up for in detail and energy. It **looks** like he has fun doing these books.

Ed Barreto, the **Titans'** latest penciller, was twice placed in awkward positions by DC. First he became J.L. Garcia Lopez's replacement on **Atari Force**, then he followed Garcia Lopez (and of course, Perez) on **Titans**. Filling the shoes of these two enormous fan favorites was no easy task. On **Atari Force** he failed; his stiffness on the book was apparent. However, on the **Titans**, this same stiffness reminds me of the stiffness that Perez displayed on the book. Tangahl inks him that way and the end result is that DC has a pretty good Perez clone, something the **Titans'** book desparately needs to remain a fan-favorite. By the way, I was wondering does anyone know how the sales figures of the two books compare now that one of the books is simply reprint? (Editor's note: According to Capital City Distribution's record, which is reprinted regularly in **CBG**, the reprint title sells approximately 40-50 places lower than before it was a reprint. Remember, this is for Direct Sales only. Newsstand sales, to the best of my knowledge, will remain approximately as they were, since fans who buy the book there do not have the option of buying the Baxter book.)

X-Men time. Paul Smith's work on the book looked as if it was greatly influenced by Frank Miller's earlier work on **Daredevil**. The elongated first panel on some pages held as much success for Smith as it did for Miller.

I can't remember seeing any panel more imitated by fan artists than his 'Leaping Wolverine.' When Smith was doing the book, nearly everyone who came up to

OKAY, MUTIE, NOW CLIMB BACK INTO YOUR CAGE... NICE AND SLOW... UNLESS YOU WANT SOME OF THE SAME.
SUCKER, YOU JUST MADE THE BIGGEST MISTAKE OF YOUR LIFE.
AND THE LAST.
SNIKT

IMPOSSIBLE! YOU COULD NOT HAVE SEEN THROUGH MY DISGUISE!
A SHAPE-CHANGER!
WHERE'D YOU COME FROM, BUB?! YOU AIN'T ONE OF THE IMPERIAL GUARD!
I AM RAKSOR, TERRAN -- A SKRULL WARRIOR!
I AM YOUR DEATH!

More scenes by John Byrne and Terry Austin . . .

me at conventions had his own version of it in his portfolio. Any artist that widely copied so early in his career is someone to be reckoned with.

Now Smith is the best penciller in comics. He's a solid storyteller who relies on a simpler line technique that a lot of the current Byrne and Perez imitators can't comprehend. His recent **X-Men/Alpha Flight** team-up series was a welcome relief from the stale, basic approach Romita Jr.'s been using on the regular book.

Not that Romita's bad mind you, he's at least tried to develop a modern 80's approach to the book. He still ranks well above Dave Cockrum. (Is this guy really a fan favorite or is it that he followed Byrne on **X-Men** and nobody could screw up its cult status?) Cockrum's the only artist I know who can draw men with chest muscles that look flat. FLAT. It doesn't matter if he inks his own pencils or if he lets someone else do it, the result is more 'stiffness' and more 'flatness' than any other so called fan favorite. Like most professionals, he's a competent storyteller, it's just that he draws so poorly.

I know that artwork is a matter of taste, of course, and there are probably loads of Cockrum fans out there. In fact, it probably won't be all that long before Perez and Byrne (and Smith, and Miller, and Simonson,etc.) fade from their fan status in much the same way that Kirby and Ditko (and to some extent, even Neal Adams) have fallen from today's fan favor.

Speaking of fans, I visited a comic shop the other day where one fan was being interviewed by a local paper. This fan stated that he read comic books something like, 'twenty hours a day.' Twenty hours a day?! He went on to say that he rarely slept or ate much and that when he ran out of comics, he'd simply start rereading each of them again. Let's get real here. Anyone whose sole purpose in life is to read comics is reading comics too much. Though this is probably (hopefully!) an isolated case, Marvel and DC

. . . including the most controversial X-Men scene ever, Wolverine's killing of a guard.

A WHILE LATER...
A SENTRY!
WE GOTTA TAKE THIS CREEP OUT-- FAST AND SILENTLY.
I CAN TELEPORT...
THANKS, PAL, BUT NO THANKS.
THIS GUY'S MINE!
MEIN GOTT.
HE'S LIKE THE GREAT CATS ON THE VELDT. WHEN HE STRIKES, THERE IS NO MERCY IN HIM.
COAST IS CLEAR-- FOLLOW ME!
SNIKT

Paul Smith's first shot at the X-Men was in Marvel Fanfare No. 4, this time teaming with popular X-inker, Terry Austin.

have a way of inspiring that type of following with the books they produce. **Teen Titans** and **X-Men** are just two of the better examples that elicit huge readerships and fan followings.

If you're reading this letter right now, you're one of those fans who really does put an emphasis on comic books in your life. You may scoff at the fellow who reads them twenty hours a day, yet at the same time you reread your entire collection of **Titans**, **X-Men**, **FF**, or **Spiderman** for that matter, every six months. Everybody likes rereading the best of their collection, even I've reread my runs of Miller's **Daredevil** and **Love and Rockets**, but there comes a point when you really should want more. The less other things you want the closer you get to becoming one of those '20 hours a day' fans.

Along the same line (I'm getting back to the subject now) some people are under the impression that you have to read all the **X-Men** or all the **Titan** comics in order to have an opinion of them. Some fans at conventions who have been around a looooong while are often telling younger fans, in effect, how stupid they (the younger fans) are for having an opinion after reading only a few issues of a given title. The older 'elitist' fans not only don't respect the younger fan's opinion, they don't even think the younger fans have a right to express an opinion. This is wake up time. Anyone can have an opinion of anything they've ever experienced. Younger fans probably have a more genuine and valid opinion than anyone else simply because they are younger fans and have not talked a great deal to other fans who might influence their decisions.

Older fans are often influenced by others, they don't really have their own opinion anymore. It's more of an amalgamation of other fans' thoughts and beliefs. Very few people can read 100 consecutive issues of any comic and still get the same feeling they got from the first 5 or 10. Anyone who reads series fiction in the form of **The Destoyer**, or **Doc Savage**, or **The Shadow** knows nothing really happens to the major characters. Is there anybody out there who can read all 250 **Shadow** novels and enjoy each one as readily as the first? Of course not. Comics are no different. **Too much** familiarity breeds contempt. Fans who no longer enjoy the **X-Men** after 100 issues deserve not to; those who are still going strong after 10 issues enjoy the familiarity that each issue brings. Neither set of fans will ever see eye to eye on the book. Their impressions are based on different circumstances. I think one of the reasons **Teen Titans** was voted as having best stories in the **CBG** poll the last couple of years was because it had not yet bred too much familiarity. Give it a couple more years.

Moving along to writers, Chris Claremont and his continual subplotting works. He continues to reach fans, nonfans, and casual readers alike. There are

"Paul Smith is the best penciller in comics."

about 20,000 hardcore comic fans in the U. S. Another 80,000 frequent comic shops on a regular basis. Since the **X-Men** sell over 100,000 copies a month in those shops, it's not hard to figure out that the **X-Men** is an extremely successful book. Even though Claremont's detractors say his writing is 'too confusing' or 'too cerebral' for younger readers, it still sells over 400,000 copies a month nationwide, which means that 300,000 copies a month are being purchased at the local drugstore. If the average turnover rate for such

readers is three years (that's according to industry figures) the books popularity should decrease after those three years as older readers move on to other things and newer readers get turned away by the continuing plotlines. That has not been the case. Even new readers, for some reason or other, have come to accept the idea of a continuing storyline and they continue to follow it. And remember, these people know nothing about comic fandom, and they don't know that **X-Men** is the most popular comic in America. Claremont must be doing something right.

Everytime Claremont mentions Storm's past, older readers cringe; new readers, on the other hand, see new characterization. A certain amount of familiarity is necessary to gain new readers. One of the major faults with Howard Chaykin's **American Flagg** is that it shuts out new readers who don't have a clue as to what's going on. It's adult of course, and I'm sure Chaykin did it that way on purpose just because so many other books do it the other way. The problem lies in that circulation is hard pressed to grow when no one new picks it up. Chaykin can afford to do this on a book he knows he will walk away from after a relatively short period of time. Claremont' commitment to his title is long term, and it shows.

The way Claremont does this is not unusual, of course,any comic series that wants to around for a while must stick to this type of formula. That includes Wolfman on **Titans**. Marv's major fault is that the cast of supporting characters he's chosen seem so much more juvenile than they have to be. Brother Blood and Trigon are good but cannot be used without lessening the impact of each appearance. The Fearsome Five (that name's on par with Brotherhood of Evil) can make more appearances but their cast is laughable. Every time they show up and fight the Titans to a draw, it makes the Titans look that much less credible.

Claremont, on the other hand, has introduced more characters in his years on the **X-Men** than the entire industry has introduced since its inception. Having so many characters to choose from when determining future plotlines comes in awfully handy. Marv brings back 'old' characters and 'impact' stars.

I started this letter by referring to artists, I'll end it the same way. Byrne's **X-Men** was good, Paul Smith's was better, Cockrum was awful, and Romita Jr. is competent. Art Adams' recent annual was the best thing the **X-Men** have seen for a long time. Give him the book. Give him **Titans** too.

Tim Hernando
Bonneville, Idaho

I've read every issue of the **X-Men** (including all the annuals) and I've also read every issue of the new **Teen Titans** (including all the annuals and drug books). To have an informed opinion you have to know what you're talking about. I do.

I like the **Teen Titans** a lot more than the **X-Men**. Chris Claremont has been living off John Byrne's X-Men for over five years now and that's not counting the time John was on the book. All Claremont does is twist or distort something John did a long time ago.

It would have been fun to see if Claremont would have left the **X-Men** five years ago to work on the **Fantastic Four,** and then left John to do both the writing and drawing on the **X-Men.**

"The X-Men's plotline constantly changes and every change is as exciting as the one before."

Eric Brooks
Glendale, CA

Teen Titans is my favorite book. The writer, Marv Wolfman, writes stories about people my age. Chris Claremont, the writer of the **X-Men,** always makes his characters turn evil. It's scary what he does to teenagers and I don't like it. **New Mutants** is even worse. Both books have great art, some of the best in comics, but I like the characters in **Teen Titans** more because they have costumes that look like superhero costumes.

Adam Burchess
Greenville, NC

Of the many letters **The Fan Connection** will receive, I am sure the majority will note that the largest problem with the X-Men is their tragic overuse. Still, in the question of who is better, I don't think the key is that the X-Men have spread themselves too thin, it's that the Titans haven't.

Naturally, my Titans bias shows through. Yet, thankfully, this is the place where it should do just that. The simple reason I drastically prefer the Titans to the X-Men is that the mutants have burnt themselves out. Only recently have we heard rumors of a new Titans book created and designed specifically to delve into even heavier characterization. Roughly six years after their first overwhelmingly successful appearance, DC risks another Titans book. Can anyone recall seeing a new Teen Titans team-up with Superman in **DC Comics Presents?** It just hasn't happened. By my counting, the X-Men (or a member therein) have appeared in **Marvel Team-Up** 15 times. Just the number of X-Mutant mini-series alone is staggering compared to the Titans' one. (Note: some might consider **Crisis** a second.) Besides their crossover with the **X-Men** themselves, and a few rare cameos, the Titans have crossed over once with the **Omega Men** and once with **Batman and the Outsiders.** I pity anyone who would try to count the number of X-Mutant crossovers.

I should point out that "X-Mutant" is a term derived from the unique position in which Mutant Comics whoops. . . I mean Marvel Comics have put themselves. When I see **Alpha Flight, X-Factor,** and **New Mutants,** I subconsciously label them X-Men books. Does anyone do this with **Vigilante** or **the Omega Men?** In conclusion, I'd sadly like to say that Marvel has forgotten the old cliche about quality and quantity. Right now, there is absolutely no contest at all between the Titans and X-Men. The Titans are worlds better. Still, I have to wonder, who would really

Paul Smith's "Leaping Wolverine" was probably copied by more fan artists than any other drawing in comics' history. Needless to say, he had as much impact with his elongated panels . . .

be the best if there was but one X-Men book.

(Editors note: Do you agree with Alan that there are too many mutants and mutant books currently available? Do you disagree? Now's the time to let us know, because in two issues that's our cover feature.)

Sammy Walton
Gatesburg, IL

Why did you limit the choices to **Teen Titans** and **X-Men?** There are quite a few fine team books out there and many of them are just as good as the two you picked. **DNAgents,** the **FF, Batman and the Outsiders, Alpha Flight, West Coast Avengers,** and the **Legion of Superheroes** should have been included. It would have given everybody more of a choice. What have you got to say?

(Editors note: We'll try not to interject any of our comments with the letters we print, that way the letter writers themselves have the last word. But since you asked, **The Fan Connection** is based on continuing debate. Each issue will deal with a super fan favorite topic, in depth, and there are plenty more topics we plan on dealing with. Keep watching and reading.)

Edward Jacobson
Brooklyn, NY

I don't like Marvel or DC much anymore. Ever since they cancelled the Avengers/JLA team-up, I kind of lost my interest in collecting comics. They disappointed hundreds of thousands of fans due to internal squabbling, and waiting for a Jon Sable/Batman team-up is most definitely not the same thing. (Where is that book, anyway?) I was really looking forward to the next **X-Men/Teen Titans** as well. When I saw your ad for **The Fan Connection** my heart jumped a little. Could it be? No, just another fanzine. But you guys give me hope. Just seeing DC and Marvel teams on the same cover again makes me feel a whole lot better

David Coates
Williamsport, PA

I'm enthusiastic about your new magazine, **The Fan Connection.** Your first issue's topic sounds interesting and provides the type of stimulative debate most fans want.

I can't say I'm a great fan of either book. I'm for the good old-fashioned diversified team book rosters. When a team is all teenagers or mutants it detracts too much from generational conflicts and imaginative origination stories of the characters portrayed. The first being the fault of the **Teen Titans,** the second being the major fault of, you guessed it, the **X-Men.**

In time, I hope you do a similar **West Coast Avengers** Vs. **Ousiders** feature. I feel these two mags will enter an even more fierce rivalry than **Teen Titans** and **X-Men.**

I also hope your magazine will be evenhanded in its coverage of the two major companies. DC works hard as a company to improve its line. A **Crisis on Infinite Earths** Vs. **Secret Wars** debate might prove a little interesting. I'd really like to know who **really** got the idea first. ■

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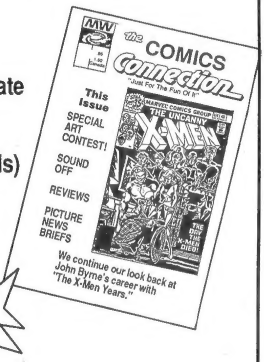

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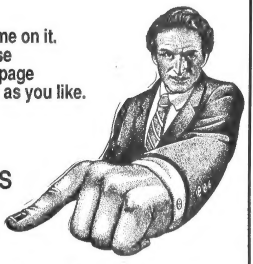
Just send us a postcard with your store's name on it. Each month we'll draw one card from all those received and the winner will get a FREE half page of advertising. It's that simple. Enter as often as you like.



SEND TO:

RETAIL CONTEST
C/O MILKY WAY GRAPHICS
BOX 381
SLEEPY EYE, MN 56085

AND REMEMBER! Distributors offer you a substantial DISCOUNT on *Comics Connection* contact them today!

Too Many To List!
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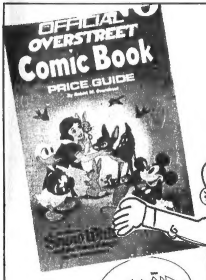

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Dear Advertiser,

We at **The Comics Connection** realize you may not want to send money **up front** to a brand new magazine you've never heard of; that's why we're making you this special

RISK FREE OFFER!!

1) **Send us your ad and tell us the issue you want it in.**
2) **We'll print it and send you a copy of that issue.**
3) **Then we'll bill you (and you have up to 45 days to pay!)**

We want to be around for a long time and to do that, we need your support. In exchange we'll give you these great ad prices:

Two page spread only $140
Full page ad only $75
Half page ad only $40

(If you decide to pay up front, and save us the cost of billing you, you can take an additional 10% off each ad.)

That's not all; we also offer our

FREQUENT ADVERTISER PROGRAM

For every 4 ads you buy, you get one of equal value free.

SEND US YOUR AD TODAY!

Remember: The Ad deadline is always the 5th day of each month.
The publication date is always the 29th of each month.

The Comics Connection
c/o Milky Way Graphics
P.O. Box 381
Sleepy Eye, MN 56085

The Comics News, Reviews, Advertising Monthly!

Bulk Rate
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